

THE BEREAN

"...EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY..." (Acts 17:11)

A SERVANT OF GOD *A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES* *PART ONE OF SIXTY FOUR*

The author of the Epistle of James identifies himself as "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." This designation reveals a great deal to us about the character of James. It is commonly believed that James is the same as the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19). If so, he chose not to identify himself as such. His humility forbade seeking a place of honor for his earthly connection to the Lord. Jesus had said, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother..." (Matthew 12:50). Of the many ways James could have chosen to identify himself, he chose to be known as "a servant of God". If he would receive any recognition, he wanted it to come for what he did for God and not for some earthly consideration. While we may look upon being a servant as degrading, James did not. Paul also called himself "a servant of God" (Titus 1:1). How many of us want a greater "title"?

James recognized that it takes more than believing in Christ to please God. The second chapter of his epistle stresses the importance of a working faith. His identification as "a servant" shows his willingness to go beyond faith into service. Paul said, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love" (Galatians 5:6). James said, "I by my works will show thee my faith" (James 2:18). Jesus taught, "Whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant" (Matthew 20:27).

A servant has no will of his own but is wholly subservient to the will of his master. The servant of God has no will but the will of the Father. The only rule of activity for the Christian is the will of God. Those who serve God faithfully will receive the crown of life (Revelation 2:10). While we beseech people to believe in God and Christ, we must likewise insist they become servants of God. If James sought no higher way to identify himself, even though he was a brother to Christ in the flesh, what better designation could we find for ourselves? Every man is a servant to someone (Romans 6:16). Can you identify yourself as "a servant of God"? If not, there is only one other master - the devil (Matthew 6:24).

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